



WARNING SIGNS

of Mental Health Conditions

- ⚠ Feeling very sad or withdrawn for more than 2 weeks
- ⚠ Severe, out-of-control, risk-taking behaviors that cause harm to self or others
- ⚠ Sudden overwhelming fear for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart, physical discomfort or fast breathing
- ⚠ Seeing, hearing or believing things that aren't real
- ⚠ Drastic changes in mood, behavior, personality or sleeping habits
- ⚠ Extreme difficulty concentrating or staying still that puts a person in physical danger or causes school failure
- ⚠ Intense worries or fears that get in the way of daily activities
- ⚠ Throwing up, using laxatives or not eating to lose weight; significant weight loss or weight gain
- ⚠ Using alcohol or drugs excessively
- ⚠ Trying to harm oneself, attempt suicide or making plans to do so

Scenario for discussion:

Until 4 weeks ago Henry was a good student. He handed assignments in on time, participated in class, maintained a steady B average and was overall a kind and respectful student. Recently you've noticed that Henry has been missing school and falling behind in his assignments. He became uncharacteristically angry when you approached him about missed homework which is negatively affecting his grade. He has fallen asleep in class several times and has called out inappropriately in class, disrupting other students. You've noticed he isn't combing his hair and is wearing dirty clothes to school, which has caused several students to laugh at Henry in the hallways and call him names. Another teacher mentioned that they asked if everything was ok at home and Henry told them his father had moved out and his mom was having a hard time with it. You've reached out to his mom via email and she said everything was fine and she didn't understand why she was being notified. You don't have the dad's new contact information. Just yesterday you heard Henry telling a friend in the hallway that his mom wouldn't even notice if he was gone. How would you use the skills we've mentioned to help Henry?

SAMPLE STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE SUCCESS:



Classroom adjustments

- Write an outline of the day's activities on the board
- Announce upcoming transitions to help students prepare for the next activity
- Provide seating in the front of the room or close to the door for a quiet exit, if needed



Incorporate activities into curriculum

- Improve communication and problem-solving skills
- Raise mental health awareness and reduce stigma
- Help your students get organized
- Check in with entire class when possible so individual students don't feel singled out
- Openly discuss bullying with the class and how harmful it can be to someone having a hard time

SAMPLE STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE SUCCESS: (continued)



Communication

- Keep a record of warning signs/problematic behavior
- Maintain regular communication between home and school
- Engage guidance office or a teacher they are comfortable with
- Offer a check in time either before or after school
- Offer the opportunity to share in a note instead of talking



Sample strength-based questions for students

- What does success mean to you?
- What are your strengths, interests, and preferences?
- What are your fears and frustrations?
- What motivates you? What reinforces you?
- What is the best way to communicate with you?
- What is the best way to provide support or suggestions?
- What has helped you be successful in the past?
- Who has worked successfully with you in the past?